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STATE DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR EUR/SCE:JERRY ISMAIL

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SUBJECT: PORTUGAL ON MACEDONIA EU MEMBERSHIP AND NAME ISSUE

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Post delivered reftel points on November 24 to Maria de Fatima Gonzalez, head of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' European Area and Enlargement Unit. Gonzalez agreed regarding the importance of Macedonia's EU and NATO integration and Macedonia's progress toward fulfilling the technical reform benchmarks, and said prospects for resolution of the "name issue" between Macedonia and Greece appear to have improved. Gonzalez said Portugal supports scheduling a date for Macedonia EU membership negotiations to begin but "we must await what comes out of the European Council meeting."

For more reporting from Embassy Lisbon and information about Portugal, please see our Intelink site:

<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/portal:portugal>  
BALLARD